

their own party have been very open about wanting to target Social Security and Medicare, RICK SCOTT being among them, and he was the leader of the National Republican Senate Campaign Committee.

But listen to this one. If you think this is just a few people, a few dangerous people, doing this, dangerous on Social Security and Medicare, that is, the Republican Study Committee, which includes a majority—a majority—of House Republicans, at least half—this is not some fringe group but half of the entire House conference—released a budget last year that proposed raising Social Security retirement age, cutting benefits to certain recipients, and even privatizing some parts of Social Security.

Let me say that again because this—I don't know if it has been reported, but it is astounding. The Republican Study Committee, including a majority of House Republicans, released a budget just last year that proposed raising the Social Security retirement age, cutting benefits to certain recipients, and even privatizing some parts of Social Security.

And almost as if to prove President Biden correct, Senator JOHNSON of Wisconsin reacted to the State of the Union by going on the radio and calling for annual votes on Social Security, calling it a Ponzi scheme.

Let me say that one again too. According to Wisconsin Public Radio, Senator JOHNSON, last week, openly called Social Security a Ponzi scheme before bemoaning the failed attempt to privatize the program during the Bush administration.

A, it is an incredible example of how out of touch MAGA Republicans are from average Americans, and, B, it shows that this idea that Republicans don't want to cut Social Security is not at all clear, no matter what Speaker McCARTHY says. There are too many in his ranks who either are calling for it now or have called for it in the recent past. We Democrats are not going to stop fighting until this plan, bubbling up in Republican quarters even now, to cut Social Security, to cut Medicare is dead—D-E-A-D.

So it brings us back to the \$64,000 question: Are Republicans going to target Social Security and Medicare?

Until Republicans actually show us their plan, we simply can't take them at their word that Social Security and Medicare won't be touched because the record over the last few years clearly shows that many of them are open to doing just that, cutting it.

#### JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Madam President, now, on judges, this week, the Senate will reach a significant milestone by confirming the 99th and 100th Federal judge of the Biden administration.

We will begin today with Cindy Chung, nominee No. 99, to serve as a circuit court judge for the Third Circuit. If confirmed, Ms. Chung would be the first Asian-American judge to ever,

ever sit on the Third Circuit. That should make us all proud.

And Cindy Chung is precisely the kind of person we want on the Federal bench. She has dedicated her career to protecting civil rights, having prosecuted White supremacists and others charged with hate crimes.

Later today, we will also vote to proceed with Gina Mendez-Miro as district judge in the District of Puerto Rico.

Judge Mendez-Miro would make history as the first LGBT American to preside in the Puerto Rico District Court.

And very quickly I want to mention last week's vote on DeAndrea Benjamin, only the second woman of color ever to serve on the Fourth Circuit. I had to miss her vote, unfortunately, because of the birth of my grandson, but if I were here, I would have proudly voted to confirm her.

The nominations of DeAndrea Benjamin and Cindy Chung are significant for many reasons. For one, the lion's share of all Federal cases are ultimately decided at the circuit court level so filling these vacancies with judges like Ms. Benjamin and Ms. Chung are essential.

Second, despite their importance, circuit courts have traditionally lagged well behind other courts in terms of diversity. We want these courts, so vital, so powerful, to represent America—all of America, not just some of it.

Ms. Benjamin and Ms. Chung will help remedy that with their unique experiences and much needed perspectives on the law.

Senate Democrats have focused intensely on expanding the diversity of our courts, and not just in terms of demographics but in terms of experience, professional experience, too. We are working hard not only to add more women, more people of color, more lawyers from unique backgrounds to the bench but people of different walks of life.

Ketanji Brown Jackson is the first Legal Aid attorney to serve on the Supreme Court. After all these years, that perspective had not been on the Court, and now it is.

So why do we want these kinds of diversity? It is simple. When Americans present their cases before these courts, they should trust that they will get a fair shake in the dispensation of justice.

The more our courts reflect the country at large in terms of backgrounds and experiences, the greater that trust will be in the long run.

Ms. Benjamin, Ms. Chung, and Ms. Mendez-Miro are all examples of the kinds of judges who will strengthen that trust.

I congratulate each of them on their nominations.

I thank Chairman DURBIN and the great members of the Judiciary Committee for moving these individuals quickly through the nominations process.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

#### UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Madam President, before I get into the topic of my speech today, I just put a tweet out about what I think about the surveillance balloons, which are very, very concerning, being on the Armed Services Committee.

You know, the Chinese surveillance over our skies is very concerning but also the fentanyl from China pouring across our borders every day that is killing 300 Americans a day, that is also very concerning and also the 800-percent increase in Chinese nationals crossing our border every day.

So I think we have got a lot of problems other than just balloons flying around our sky. We need to recognize that. We need to start understanding we have an adversary in China that is our biggest, and the President of the United States—he obviously needs to protect our air, but he needs to protect our borders. We are having people die every day.

What is the most important? The most important thing is protecting the sovereignty of our country, and that is our borders and the sky and protecting our people on the ground, especially from this deadly drug.

So I just wanted to say that before I get into my speech because I know it is important. China is our No. 1 adversary, and we need to start watching every part of it and still watch these balloons fly around the sky that we have no clue of what they are doing or why they are here.

#### ABORTION

Madam President, my Democratic colleagues frequently say conservatives are radical in order to score political points. Even President Biden has used his office to attack conservatives with language I won't give more air time by repeating here at this time.

Liberals do this to scare Americans into ignoring the failures of their own policies and to distract voters from how extreme they have become.

This was on full display in last week's State of the Union Address, as President Biden misled the country about Republican ideas and straight up twisted the facts of his own agenda.

President Biden sold the state of the Nation as perfectly fine, ignoring many of the issues Americans care most about. The reality is, President Biden and my colleagues on the far left are sometimes way, way out of touch with what the American people believe in.

Democrats frequently reject commonsense proposals but support extreme policies put forth by the far, far leftwing of their party. Liberal representatives have to do this because they are aligned with a woke mob that will cancel them if they disagree. Although that far-left mob is very vocal, they don't represent the vast majority of Americans. Sadly, President Biden's position on the border, the economy,